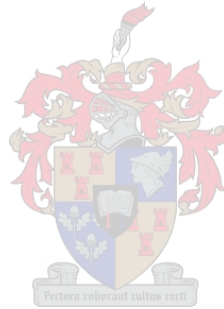


Content and trends in inclusion research in South African community educational
psychology: A South African journal review

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that the reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third-party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it to obtain any qualification.

Date: March 2021

Opsomming

Die inhoud en tendense in navorsing word as 'n belangrike aspek van navorsing beskou omdat dit 'n aanduiding kan gee van die beweging in en die inhoud van die spesifieke veld. In hierdie studie is die inhoud en neigings in gemeenskapsopvoedkundige sielkunde deur die lens van insluiting ondersoek. 'n Ontleding van die inhoud is gedoen om die inhoud en metodologiese tendense tussen drie prominente Suid-Afrikaanse joernale tussen 2013 en 2017 te ondersoek. Die joernale het die *South African Journal of Psychology*, die joernaal *Education as Change*, en die *Journal of Education*, ingesluit. Uit die 469 artikels wat ontleed is, het 11 artikels aan die kriteria voldoen. Geen artikels in die *South African Journal of Psychology* het die woorde “insluiting” of “insluitende opvoeding” bevat nie. Die vernaamste neigings wat geïdentifiseer is, het egter maatskaplike geregtigheid en ontwikkeling ingesluit. Die maatskaplike regstema is saamgestel uit subtema's wat insluiting, uitsluiting, transformasie, gelykheid, diversiteit en insluitende opvoeding bevat het. Billikheid en diversiteitstema's is geïdentifiseer as temas wat nie algemeen in vorige navorsing voorgekom het nie. Die ontwikkelingsubtema het bestaan uit onderwysers-, beleidsontwikkeling en wetgewing. Die fokus op ontwikkeling, veral kurrikulum- en onderwysersontwikkeling, het vorige navorsing wat gedoen is ondersteun. Metodologiese analise het bevind dat kwalitatiewe en gemengde metodes die algemeenste gebruik is. Geen artikels in hierdie studie het slegs kwantitatiewe metodologie bevat nie. Dit is ook in pas met vorige navorsing wat aangedui het dat die fokus van kwantitatiewe na kwalitatiewe en gemengde metodologiese neigings verskuif. Vorige navorsing het ook gedui

op die belangrikheid van gemengde metodologie wat gegrond is op die kompleksiteit en diversiteit van inklusiewe opvoedkundige navorsing. Die bevindinge van hierdie studie dui daarop dat die navorsingsfokus in opvoedkundige sielkunde op beleidsontwikkeling en maatskaplike geregtigheid val. Die produksie van kennis word dus gefokus op die skepping en ontwikkeling van beleid. Dit is opvallend dat die navorsing hoofsaaklik fokus op beleidsontwikkeling en dit wil voorkom asof daar 'n tekort is aan beleidsevaluering waarin die doeltreffendheid van hierdie beleide oorweeg word. Beperkings van hierdie studie sluit in die beperkte aantal joernale wat ondersoek is. 'n Vermeerdering in die getal joernale kan leiding gee tot 'n breër inligtingsbasis.

Trefwoorde: Insluitende onderwys, insluiting

Abstract

The content and trends in research are regarded as an important area of research as they can give an indication of the movement and content of a specific field. In this study, the content and trends in community educational psychology were explored through the lens of inclusion. A content analysis was conducted to explore the content and method trends in articles published in three prominent South African journals between 2013 and 2017. The current study was part of a larger study that investigated most recent published research on inclusion in educational contexts in a set of 15 selected well established English language South African and international educational psychology, education and psychology journals. The journals included in the total sample were Perspectives in Education, South African Journal of higher education, Journal of Education, Education as Change, Journal for Psychology in Africa, South African journal of psychology, Journal of special education, Educational research, British journal of educational studies, School psychology international, International journal of educational psychology, School psychology review, International journal of inclusive education, British journal of educational psychology, and the British journal of special education. In the current study the 3 journals selected were the South African Journal of Psychology, Journal of Education and Education as Change. The main reason for focusing on these journals are that they are well established South African education and psychology journals. A total of 11 of 469 articles met the criteria. No articles in the *South African Journal of Psychology* contained the keywords “inclusion” or “inclusive education”. The main trends that were identified were social justice and development. The social justice theme comprised the subthemes inclusion, exclusion, transformation, equity, diversity and inclusive

education. Equity and diversity were identified as themes that were not prevalent in previous research. The development subtheme comprised teacher development, curriculum development, policy development and legislation. The focus on development, in particular curriculum and teacher development complemented previous research. Research design trend analysis found that qualitative methodologies and mixed methodologies were predominant. No articles used in this study contained quantitative methodology only. This trend is in line with previous research that has indicated that the focus is shifting from quantitative to qualitative and mixed methodological studies. Previous research has revealed the importance of mixed methodology based on the complexity and diversity of inclusive education research. The findings in this study show that the research focus in educational psychology is on policy development and social justice. Knowledge production is therefore focused on the creation and development of policies. It is, however, notable that such research focusses mainly on policy development and lacks policy evaluation in which the efficacy of these policies is considered. Limitations of this study included the small number of journals explored. An increase in the number of journals may lead to a wider base of information.

Keywords: Inclusive education, inclusion

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Contents

DECLARATION	i
Opsomming	ii
Abstract.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vi
Contents.....	vii
List of tables	x
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
Background.....	1
Inclusive education and inclusion	1
Community educational psychology	11
Description of the problem and the research question	14
Research Question	17
Research Goals.....	18
Research Methodology	18
Methods	21
Sampling and data analysis.....	21
Ethical considerations	22
Conclusion	23
Chapter 2 Literature Review.....	25
Introduction	25
Community Psychology	30
Inclusive education.....	34
Educational Psychology.....	39
Chapter 3 Methodology	44
Methodology.....	44

Introduction	44
Paradigm	44
Research Methodology	47
Population and Sampling	53
Coding	56
Ethics	57
Chapter 4 Results	59
Chapter 5 Discussion	69
Themes and Subthemes	70
Social Justice	70
<i>Inclusion</i>	71
<i>Exclusion</i>	71
<i>Transformation</i>	72
<i>Equity</i>	72
<i>Diversity</i>	72
<i>Inclusive Education</i>	73
Development	73
<i>Teacher development</i>	73
<i>Curriculum development</i>	74
<i>Legislation</i>	74
<i>Policy development</i>	74
Differences in research themes	75
Research design and method trends	76
Conclusion	77
Chapter 6 Limitations and strengths of the study	79
Limitations	79

Strengths	79
Summary.....	80
References	81

List of tables

Table 1. Number of articles containing the keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”	60
Table 2. Articles containing keywords, used in an educational context, according to year.	62
Table 3. Publication rates of articles with the keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”, per journal, in the period 2013-2017	64
Table 4. Themes and subthemes identified in the 11 selected articles.	64
Table 5. Research designs identified in sample articles.	66
Table 6. Methods identified in selected articles.	67

Chapter 1 Introduction

Background

Inclusive education and inclusion

The current study was part of a larger study that investigated most recent published research on inclusion in educational contexts in a set of 15 selected well established English language South African and international educational psychology, education and psychology journals. The journals included in the total sample were Perspectives in Education, South African Journal of higher education, Journal of Education, Education as Change, Journal for Psychology in Africa, South African journal of psychology, Journal of special education, Educational research, British journal of educational studies, School psychology international, International journal of educational psychology, School psychology review, International journal of inclusive education, British journal of educational psychology, and the British journal of special education. In the current study the 3 journals selected were the South African Journal of Psychology, Journal of Education and Education as Change. The main reason for focusing on these journals are that they are well established South African education and psychology journals.

Inclusive education has long been regarded as the future for education as it looks to broaden education by including learners with learning difficulties in mainstream schools (Artiles, Harris-Murri & Rostenberg, 2006). This focus on learners with disabilities is indicative of inclusive education, but many other learners are excluded by the current model of inclusive education. The previous

model used in educational psychology was based on the medical model (Kirby, 2016), which focused on the treatment of individuals and on finding the problems and solutions within them. Kirby (2016) argues that the medical model holds that disability is an inherent flaw within the individual. This point of view created an environment in which placement in special education programmes with the aim of improving specific weaknesses could be justified. Kirby also believes that these decisions are based in policy and legislation. This has created a sense that it is only in special education classrooms that learners with learning difficulties can be taught. This might have had negative implications as teachers saw success in a special education classroom in terms of the physiological abilities of the learner, absolving them as teachers from the responsibility of the education of the learner with special needs. This responsibility thus fell on the special needs education teacher (Kirby 2016; Damianidou & Phtiaka, 2017). It is argued, however, that policy and legislation alone are not enough to create meaningful inclusion in the education system and to make teachers aware of the role they can play in the implementation and success of inclusion and inclusive education in schools (Somma, 2018; Damianidou & Phtiaka, 2017). Koutsouris, Anglin-Jaffe and Stentiford (2019) argue that inclusion stretches further than policy and is realised on a day-to-day basis in social interactions where there is a lesser effect by the instituted laws and policies. These processes are mostly ignored in the literature as they are seen as challenging or at odds with the process of inclusion (Koutsouris et al., 2019).

It is further argued by Kirby (2016) that public policy has allowed for disabled individuals to be oppressed. This oppression presents in the forms of social,

financial, environmental and psychological oppression. Disability is often contrasted with ability and could lead to ableism. The combination of ableism and the medical model is regarded as the origin of the oppression experienced by people with disabilities. Zhang (2013) discusses a similar concept, differentiating between two forms of disability. The first is medical disability, referring to individuals with a physical disability, disease, or differences as the problem. In the case of medical disability, the focus is on the impairment instead of on the needs of the individual. The second disability Zhang (2013) discusses is social disability. This disability comprises systemic barriers, exclusion by society and negative attitudes as factors that ultimately determine who is “disabled”. Zhang (2013) believes that individuals should be included in society, regardless of their differences. Kirby (2016) found that, in the United States of America, learners in special education classrooms completed less work and could choose only from a specific set of subjects. This in turn led to a lower tertiary study rate as the legislation stipulated certain subjects as suitable for these students and excluded subjects necessary to enter tertiary education.

In recent times, a shift in framework has occurred with a movement towards an ecological model (Kang, Wei & Liang, 2016). The ecological model provides a description of various layers of analysis ranging from micro to macro levels in society and how these impact on and shape individual experiences. These factors influence the individual’s behaviour through the interaction with the individual’s internal processes and attributes. This movement prescribes that inclusive education should focus on more than mere disability and learning barriers in order to be seen to be practising inclusion (Zhang, 2013). Somma

(2018) believes that this focus should be placed just as much on the evaluation and change of common and traditional practices in schools as on changing broad policies and legislation. In this regard, Damianidou and Phtiaka (2017) argue that inclusion should be seen as the reconstruction of educational policies in order to dismantle any barriers to inclusion. Kozleski et al. (2013) argue that equity should be used as a measurement instrument in the realisation of inclusive education. They believe that the conception of inclusive education includes the equitable redistribution of rights and access to educational resources. It should move beyond the mere integration of students with disabilities into mainstream classrooms. Kozleski et al. (2013) observe that inclusive education was initially aimed at change in educational systems to facilitate the creation of greater participation, action and outcomes of any and all students. Inclusive education can thus be viewed as a systemic change (Kozleski et al., 2013).

There has been a move away from the process of integration, to one in the direction of inclusion (Avramidis, Bayliss & Burden, 2000). Avramidis et al. (2000) observe that this movement has occurred because integration can be seen as a matter of children being placed in schools where they are least restricted, while inclusion refers to the creation of an accessible school system where children can access education on a larger scale. This is still a problem, however, as the concept of inclusion must be defined. The broad etymology of the word “inclusion” has its roots in the Latin word *includo*. Although the word can be used in both a positive (to incorporate) and a negative (to entrap) way, Koutsouris et al. (2019) argue that it is encouraging that it is only used in the

positive sense of belonging and participation when referring to respect and equality in educational spheres.

Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) attempt to do this when they create distinctions between inclusive education, integration and inclusion. They argue that integration is a process through which children are placed in mainstream schools and must adapt. This is supported by Zhang (2013), who claims that integration refers to the placement of a child within a mainstream school, with the responsibility of accommodation to the move falling on the learner. Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) argue that inclusive education is based on a value system that considers diversity in gender, race, nationality, background, physical disability, and levels of academic achievement. The concept of inclusion can be seen as more than simply including children with barriers to learning in mainstream schools. They believe that it is a moral issue of human rights to attempt to create a more inclusive society. Lindsay (2007) argues that special needs classes and schools are contrary to children's rights as they segregate children from their normally developing peer group. It is thus important to analyse the way in which institutions approach inclusive education.

In 2001, White Paper 6 was released, stating the inclusive education plan for South Africa. This paper focuses on the inequalities in the South African education system caused by the influence of apartheid. These inequalities were based on two characteristics, race and physical disability (Department of Education, 2001). The White Paper 6 focuses on building an inclusive education system using race and physical disability as guiding factors to restore equal education for all. Florian (2008) observes that inclusive education should provide for all learners, regardless of any perceived differences in race, learning

barriers, and any social, linguistic, emotional or cultural differences. In accordance with Florian, Waitoller and Artiles (2013) argue that inclusive schools should have the capacity to develop and nurture teachers who are able to facilitate, uphold and improve the processes of these schools, in order to provide a space for all learners to receive the same level of education.

Inclusion is generally seen as a human rights agenda that requires access and equity within education (Florian, 2008). Florian (2008) raises questions regarding the right to education versus rights in education, which highlights the process of inclusion and inclusive education. She argues that the process of special education is both inclusive and exclusive, in that it separates learners who need additional help from those who attend mainstream schools (Florian, 2008). Zhang (2013) states in simple terms that inclusion “supports children’s rights, regardless of abilities and backgrounds”. A situation has arisen where many schools and institutions describe themselves and their practices as inclusive, but they practice integration, and not true, meaningful inclusion. The White Paper 6 regards inclusion as the recognition and respect of different needs within education (Department of Education, 2001). It also states that inclusion is aimed at supporting learners and educators in having their learning and teaching needs met (Department of Education, 2001). Furthermore, the White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) states that inclusion is a focus on the overcoming of barriers within the system itself. The answer in this case is the application of inclusive education. However, the relation between inclusive education and inclusion should be considered. In current literature one can find various examples where the terms “inclusion”, “inclusive education” and “integration” are used interchangeably (Kasari, Freeman, Bauminger &

Alkin, 1999). Colley (2018) researched the ambiguities in the term “inclusion” in the implementation and practicality of inclusive education. He found that even though the policies and legislation attempt to distinguish inclusion from inclusive education, the language used in the policy documents contradicts this. This causes confusion and uncertainty within research (Black-Hawkins, 2014). Is inclusion applied within inclusive education, or is inclusive education in its selectivity only special education under a different name? Florian (2008) argues that inclusive education aims to negate the problems of marginalisation in special education. In more recent research, however, the terms have been separated, and according to Hausstätter (2013) inclusion should not be seen as a state, or end goal, but rather as a process. Hausstätter (2013) believes that perspectives on inclusion are used to inform the theoretical and practical worlds of inclusive and special education. Inclusion is made up of various factors, such as available education and a democratic school culture (Hausstätter 2013). Inclusion is not a strategy that can be reduced to a didactical approach or a method of increasing school effectiveness; that inclusion should be seen as a non-negotiable value (Hausstätter, 2013).

This emphasises the importance of study in the field of inclusive education, and into whether inclusive education is approached correctly. Inclusive education is not approached equally in all countries. UNESCO defines inclusion as “a process that helps to overcome barriers limiting the presence, participation and achievement of learners” (“Inclusion in education”, n.d.). This is in contrast to the definition of inclusive education provided by UNESCO as the “process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners”

(Alves, 2019, p65). Inclusive education systems are therefore systems that aim to identify and remove barriers to access, participation and success of learners.

In current research, focus has been placed on inclusive education. This dissertation considers inclusion, however. Therefore, a distinction is made between inclusive education and inclusion, and the way in which inclusion is incorporated in community educational psychology is explored.

Emmers, Baeyens and Petry (2019) believe that inclusion is based on three pillars that should be established to provide for an inclusive learning environment. The first two pillars are inclusive practice and inclusive policy. The third pillar, inclusive culture, forms the basis for the other two pillars to function optimally. The United Nations defined Sustainable Development Goals, which are aimed to increase quality education for all, including persons with disabilities, indigenous people and children who are considered vulnerable (Alves, 2019). Alves (2019) notes that inclusive education requires schools to respond to all learners, focusing on those with disabilities and who are vulnerable. Inclusive education refers chiefly to students with special education needs and disabilities; one of the most important aspects of inclusion is mainstream schools and their teachers.

Artiles et al. (2006) argue that inclusion is a form of social justice based on the premise that it has a significant influence on policy, research and practice. Inclusion also has a variety of meanings, ranging from the inclusion of children with disabilities in general classrooms, to the placement of children with disabilities in general classrooms with the adaptation of policies, values and educational practices.

In this study, I conducted a thematic content analysis to identify certain themes concerning inclusion in educational psychology in major South African education journals. The aim of this study was to establish how inclusion and inclusive education scholarship reflects in the South African literature. The study was designed to identify themes emerging in recent studies on inclusion within established mainstream South African academic journals publishing education and psychological research. These themes were explored through the lens of inclusion. This enabled me to identify focus areas, and areas that had been overlooked in the South African context. Graham and Ismail (2011) observe that for decades it has been hard to define what should be included in community psychology; this may have led to fewer studies being conducted in this field, as although some community psychology studies may have been classified as belonging to another field.

The reason for the exploration for themes in this research study is that, in many cases, the term inclusive education seems to apply only to those with disabilities. In his studies in the United Kingdom (UK) and several other countries, Colley (2018) found that students with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties were largely excluded from legislation, as well as from practice. He argues that curricula are based on flawed linear and academic models and therefore enforce the exclusion of learners with severe or profound and multiple learning barriers. Artiles' (2011) work supports this argument, finding that inequities in education are based on the racialisation of disabilities. This has led several researchers to argue that race and physical disability have followed the same path when it comes to equitable education. While Artiles (2011) focuses only on the exclusion of race, others have found

that gender has also been excluded from debates on inclusion in inclusive education.

Malins (2015) looked at the experiences of teachers with regard to gender and race diversity in their classrooms. Although she found that the policy underpinning the education of diverse gender identities was commendable, there were still areas of the application of these policies that required improvement. For instance, teachers who were responsible for implementing these policies were trying to avoid upsetting the parents, based on parents' assumed resistance. Malins (2015) argues that teachers should be trained specifically to deal with parents when the subject matter is of a sensitive nature. The solution to this, it is argued, is that not only pre-service educators but also practicing educators should be trained to navigate parental sensitivities about topics that are considered to be of a sensitive nature. Therefore, the training and upskilling of teachers are important factors to consider when implementing inclusive education policies with the aim of moving ultimately to a more inclusive education system.

The efficacy of inclusion and the resultant inclusive education is not based solely on policies, but also on the implementation of those policies. South Africa is regarded as having one of the strongest inclusive education policies in the world. This does not translate into practice, according to Donohue and Bornman (2014). They argue that two limitations are currently the lack of clarity in the policy, and poor implementation of this policy.

Other issues that one would assume fall under inclusive education such as gender, age, race and religion are often ignored. One must thus explore the

true nature of inclusion, and whether the country can truly be seen to be practicing successful inclusion.

Inclusion is not, however, limited to schools and inclusive education; it is a shared value in community educational psychology and inclusive education.

Hausstätter (2013) argues that inclusion is not an issue exclusive to schools but one that should also be considered and applied in wider society. Inclusion is generally considered to be a core value of community psychology, especially in a country such as South Africa where the effects of years of exclusion are still felt to this day (Reich et al., 2017). Ireland compiled a programme in which community relations were included in school curricula to inculcate the concept of inclusion in learners, who would later become members of various communities (Smith, 2002). They focused on respect for self and others, appreciation for the interdependence of people within society, cultural understanding, and an appreciation of how conflict can be handled in non-violent ways (Smith, 2002). I thus argue in this study that inclusion is an important, shared value in community psychology and inclusive education.

Community educational psychology

My study focuses on the trends and content of studies on inclusion from a community educational psychology perspective. Community educational psychology has gained prominence in recent times (Pillay, 2008). The term can be seen as consisting of three entities; community, educational psychology, and community educational psychology. These will be explained in this section.

The novel nature of the term dictated that I first understood the parts that make up the term, from there establishing how these interact to provide me with a

new and integrated meaning. Community has various definitions and meanings and is used in a variety of forms and contexts. At first glance, a “community” can be a specific geographical area. Further deliberation of the word brings about other possibilities, such as a political sense, as well as a “community of practice”, whereby the community is defined in terms of people working and thinking together (Rohleder, Swartz, Carolissen, Bozalek & Leibowitz, 2007, p254). It can be argued that a community identity is constructed through discourses around certain factors that include the “geographical community, ethnic categories, relations between ingroups and outgroups and community identity” (Rohleder et al., 2007, p254). It is through these discourses that bonds are created between individuals who form part of the community (Colombo & Senatore, 2005, as cited in Rohleder et al., 2007).

During the apartheid era, the term “community” was often used to refer to black residential areas, especially low-income geographical communities and groups of people. In this way it was used as an instrument with to discriminate against people (Thornton & Ramphele, 1988; Butchart & Seedat, 1990; Rohleder et al., 2007).

It was also from this definition and the actions of the apartheid government that community psychology developed in South Africa (Pillay, 2008). Community psychology refers to the way in which individuals interact with their environment and their contexts (Pillay, 2008). Yen (2007, as cited in Pillay, 2008) refers to community as the social groups to which a person belongs, or the groups to which others assume that person belongs. The role of educational psychologists should also be considered within the framework of community psychology, in order to determine the path to be followed by educational

psychologists when practicing community educational psychology. Anderman (2011) argues that it is the responsibility of the educational psychologist to make policymakers aware of the research done in educational psychology to effect change on a community level. Community educational psychology places a focus on the community and how educational psychology can be implemented to bring about change at the community level, and with it improvements in education and the community.

The integration of these three concepts led Pillay (2008) to attempt to define community educational psychology. The concept of community educational psychology therefore refers to the focus on the improvement of psychosocial well-being through the active participation of the community in education (Pillay, 2008). This participation and improvement is facilitated by an increase in knowledge, skills and values that aim to empower the members of the community. The circumstances of the individuals are improved, and through this improvement, the psychological well-being of the individual participant is improved (Pillay, 2008). The effect and area of improvement of community educational psychology is therefore not limited to education and educational institutions but spreads across the community; however, the basis of the empowerment originates from an educational perspective.

In one of the first academic papers that refers to community educational psychology, Pillay (2008) raises four important issues surrounding community educational psychology. The first of these is that the concept of community should be viewed from an ecological perspective. The way in which the term “community” has been used, and is currently being used in South Africa is thus important. The second issue is that community educational psychology consists

of both community and educational psychology. Community educational psychology should therefore be informed by the educational empowerment of individuals, leading to improvements not only for those individuals, but also for the community. Thirdly, higher education institutions have an important role to play in the development of community educational psychology in relation to teaching, learning and research. Fourthly, community engagement and participation are of great importance when the field is explored and developed, and valuable contributions to communities should be made.

Description of the problem and the research question

There is a level of integration among inclusion, community psychology and educational psychology. Community research often focuses on prevention, empowerment, sense of community, stress and coping, as well as diversity. In this sense community psychology shares the concepts of empowerment, diversity, and stress and coping. It is important that focus areas of community psychology and inclusion are shared (Boyd, 2014). Lange and Abidi (2015) highlight the fact that the idea of inclusive education is changing as the world changes. It is more than just education for children with disabilities. They argue that migration has changed the landscape of countries to such an extent that inclusive education is necessary, not only for children with learning disabilities, but for adults and immigrants as well. It is commonly believed that inclusive education has developed to such a point that Downing and Peckham-Hardin (2006) argue that special needs learners are now readily accepted into the mainstream education system. In contrast, Sacks and Haider (2017) believe that the implementation of inclusive education programmes is still problematic

as these programmes are subject to different laws, different resource distribution and differences in social acceptance in some countries, specifically the USA and India.

The discrepancy between articles such as Downing and Peckham-Hardin (2006) and Sacks and Haider (2017) raises the important point that research in inclusive education is contested. This makes this research study and its identification of themes and methods prevalent in inclusive education research particularly important.

This study aimed to identify trends in inclusion in articles dealing with inclusive education. The study entailed an analysis of South African education journals published between the years 2013 and 2017. The data were analysed using thematic content analysis.

This study focuses on articles on inclusive education in South African journals, and includes the *South African Journal of Psychology*, the *Journal of Education* and the journal *Education as Change*. The timeframe was chosen specifically to cover the five years preceding the start of this study. As mentioned above, the rationale for the study is based on the fact that few studies exist on trends analysis and this may have contributed to the lack of insight into knowledge generation (Graham & Ismail, 2011).

As community educational psychology aims to place a focus on the integration of community and educational psychology, a need to explore the current trends arose. The movement toward inclusion, and the research done on this concept should encompass various values that are reflected in community educational psychology. In South Africa, the focus on community psychology is particularly

important given to the educational challenges the country faces. These are connected to the community. The ecological framework focused on by modern educational psychologists states the importance of viewing the individual as experiencing various influences on his or her behaviour. These influences range from intrapersonal, to interpersonal, societal, economic, familial, education and community pressures (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010). There was a need to explore the values and trends as these would reflect the current behaviour and thinking in this movement. It could also reveal the way in which this thinking has evolved in recent times. With the movement toward the ecological model, the focus of inclusive education has shifted to concepts such as participation, recognising diversity, empowerment, and community involvement. This research study aimed to investigate whether these concepts have been explored in recent literature, and to identify any other values that may be important in community educational psychology, with specific reference to inclusion.

Research on how inclusion is represented in community educational psychology was studied, and the values presented were explored. The study included an investigation of the methods used in community educational psychology, as well as the themes that have arisen from previous research.

As there is considerable variation among communities, especially in South Africa, I considered inclusion in relation to community educational psychology, and how it was represented in the research studies, and whether these studies showed certain trends in community psychology, as well as educational psychology.

When addressing the literature, it became clear that integration was often confused with inclusion. The Salamanca statement argues that schools with an “inclusive orientation” will make certain provisions and that they will provide:

the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all ... and [will] improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system (UNESCO, 1994, pix).

Research Question

The main research question in this study was

“What themes and trends in content and methods regarding inclusion as central to community educational psychology are reflected in South African education journals articles”.

The sub-questions for the research study were:

1. What trends in inclusion are evident in community educational psychology in selected journals published between 2013 and 2017?
2. What methods and theories are employed in community educational psychology literature focusing on inclusion in selected journals published between 2013 and 2017?
3. What commonalities and differences in the value placed on inclusion in community educational psychology scholarship and established practice are reflected in the identified journals?

Research Goals

The research goals of this study were to determine the content and research design, methods and trends that reflect the concept of inclusion in community educational psychology in South African community psychology journals published between 2013 and 2017. To this end, the study explored the research design, methods and theories employed in community educational psychology literature focusing on inclusion, within the specific timeframe. The commonalities and differences reflected in community educational psychology literature focusing on inclusion, and current policy were also explored. This indicated how current practice reflected or ran counter to the notion of inclusion in community educational psychology. In addition, the study investigated the disjuncture between policy and practice, and whether the apparent focus on inclusion was reflected in inclusive education literature.

The research aimed to explore the trends in community educational research, and how these relate to our understanding of inclusion.

Research Methodology

The current study was part of a larger study that investigated most recent published research on inclusion in educational contexts in a set of 15 selected well established English language South African and international educational psychology, education and psychology journals. The journals included in the total sample were Perspectives in Education, South African Journal of higher education, Journal of Education, Education as Change, Journal for

Psychology in Africa, South African journal of psychology, Journal of special education, Educational research, British journal of educational studies, School psychology international, International journal of educational psychology, School psychology review, International journal of inclusive education, British journal of educational psychology, and the British journal of special education.

In the current study the 3 journals selected were the South African Journal of Psychology, Journal of Education and Education as Change. The main reason for focusing on these journals are that they are well established South African education and psychology journals.

This content analysis of journal articles follows a quantitative, descriptive approach and is located in a post-positivist paradigm.

Post-positivism claims that there is a reality that is independent of our own, and that this reality can be studied objectively. This reality cannot be fully known owing to the human limitations of researchers (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2014). Post-positivism holds that the knowledge that is sought should be value free. Post-positivists believe that the researcher and the subject, in this case the journals, are not independent, and that the researcher can influence the how, the what and the outcome of that which is observed. In this study, the analysis was cross-checked by the researcher and his supervisor to incorporate member-checking, thus ensuring the validity of the study. This was very important in this study as the aim was to derive themes and from the content of the journals that would be used in the study. The quantitative nature of the study provided the researcher with a descriptive view of the content of the journals and the themes pertaining to community educational psychology that they contained.

Journals are often used for content analysis, and various reasons for this exist. Journals are regarded as a platform where scholars can communicate ideas, encourage discussion and share findings from empirical research. Journals reflect changing trends, as well as the theoretical direction in which certain fields are moving (Nolen, 2009). A lack of information in certain areas may show a lack of exposure in certain fields. This study aimed to explore current trends and methods in inclusion in community educational psychology research.

Content analysis was conducted in this study. Various definitions of content analysis exist. Krippendorff (2004, p.18) describes content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts”. Stemler (2001) defines it as a systematic process that enables the compression of information into fewer categories by the rules of coding. An investigation of the overall trends in inclusion research was undertaken in this study, making content analysis an appropriate research method, as it enables the researcher to compress a large amount of data into more manageable units. Stemler (2001) states that content analysis can be used to discover and describe the various foci of groups’, individuals’ or societies’ attention. Using this process, the researcher was able to identify themes pertaining to inclusion and community educational psychology.

A common problem that arises in content analysis, especially when dealing with research into concepts and themes, is the fact that synonyms may be used to indicate the same concept in different contexts or articles. There is no valid weighting system, and the only way in which to combat the problem is for the researcher to be aware of the problems that this may cause (Stemler, 2001). White and Marsh (2006) believe that the flexible nature of content analysis is a

positive, as researchers can adapt it to suit the needs of whatever study they are conducting without too much difficulty.

Graham and Ismail (2013) argue that content analysis is important as it is a way of identifying trends in knowledge production, as well as of explore relevant trends and movements in a certain field. They also believe that if a field is in crisis, content analysis will help the field to develop and better identify the social change that it aims to bring about. While a content analysis of community psychology and community educational psychology is an important process, Graham and Ismail (2013) observe that few content analyses of community educational psychology have been done since the 1990s.

Some analyses of inclusion and community psychology principles that have been conducted since the start of the 2000s include those by Seedat, MacKenzie and Stevens (2004) and Qi and Ha (2012), but no research that focuses on a particular group of journals has conducted on trends in inclusion and community educational psychology.

Such a content analysis was conducted in the present study. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) observe that content analysis enables the researcher to enhance his or her understanding of data by testing the theoretical knowledge of a certain topic.

Methods

Sampling and data analysis

The articles used in this study were gathered from issues of the *South African Journal of Psychology*, the *Journal of Education* and *Education as Change*,

from the years 2013-2017. The articles were sampled based on the fact that they contained some mention of “inclusion” or “inclusive education” in the abstract. Only the abstracts of the articles were used to identify themes. This timeframe of 2013-2017 was selected because the study commenced in 2018 and was focused on the most recent research in the field.

During this timeframe, the *South African Journal of Psychology* published volumes 43-47, containing a total of 236 articles. The *Journal of Education* published volumes 55-67, containing a total of 89 articles. The journal *Education as Change* published volumes 17-21, containing 150 articles. A total of 475 articles was therefore used in this research.

The selected abstracts were coded to identify themes. The data were cross-checked by the supervisor to ensure the validity and reliability of the coding. Thematic content analysis followed to identify and categorise themes. Basic quantitative data were obtained from descriptive statistics. It should also be noted that some abstracts fell into several codes as research methods were explored in conjunction with thematic analysis.

During coding, abstracts containing the word “education” were used. These articles were coded according to the theory applied in the article, the participants, geographical location, findings, and community educational psychology values reflected in the article.

Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations regarding a content analysis are largely uncharted territory. The use of secondary sources to complete this type of study allows it to depend on the ethical strength of the sources of information. Tripathy (2013) argues that ethical considerations should still be observed, with a focus on

confidentiality. He believes that when a study does not do enough to ensure confidentiality of its participants, the use of secondary data should be subject to a consent waiver. However, Tripathy (2013) is referring specifically to considerations in Iran. The lack of data available on ethical considerations in content analysis in the South African system could be an indication that content analysis includes an observance of ethical standards, as the original source would have had to comply with the appropriate ethical considerations. Permission regarding further use of original data is implied as soon as data are made available in a public forum such as the Internet, books or journals (Tripathy, 2013). However, original data in studies were not used in this content analysis; ethical approval of this journal content analysis was thus not necessary.

Conclusion

The concepts of inclusion, inclusive education and community educational psychology are explored in this thesis. Current trends show that inclusive education focuses on disabilities and barriers to learning. Factors such as age, gender, religion, language and culture should be considered when inclusion is discussed. This extends beyond the concept of inclusive education as we have come to know it in South Africa.

Community educational psychology is a new concept that aims to integrate community and educational psychology. The concept encapsulates the way in which educational psychology and education can be used to improve the life of the individual and the community. This is in line with the movement towards an ecological model of educational psychology in which various influences on the behaviour and development of the individual are considered.

It is therefore important to investigate whether the value of inclusion that is associated with community educational psychology is represented in current research in the field of educational psychology. This research therefore focuses on inclusion as a value and how it is represented in educational psychology literature.

This research aimed to identify how themes, research design and method trends in articles on inclusion in selected education and psychology journals reflect current scholarship in community educational psychology. It also aimed to determine where the field stands in relation to inclusive education policy and directives about inclusion.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Introduction

Educational psychology and community psychology are regarded as two separate sub-disciplines of psychology. They are, however, inextricably linked when we consider them through the lens of inclusion. We have to consider aspects of community psychology and educational psychology if we want to identify the movement and trends within community educational psychology. Nolen (2009) argues that a lack of information about certain issues highlights a lack of awareness in certain areas of the specific discipline's knowledge. For this reason, it is important to look at the content of the research done in educational psychology, inclusive education and community psychology. Graham and Ismail (2011) suggest that content and method trends analyses are important for any field as they highlight the current trends in a field within a specific timeframe.

Journal content analysis is a research method that has been widely applied within community psychology (Graham & Ismail, 2011; Schruijer & Stephenson, 2010; Kim, Koh, Jo, Nam & Kim, 2014; Angelique & Culley, 2000; Seedat, Mackenzie & Stevens, 2004; Wasco & Bond, 2010), but less so in educational psychology. In this literature review, I discuss the themes that have arisen in studies that are pertinent to the field. Content analysis has been widely used to characterise the nature of methodological and theoretical developments in various psychological fields of psychology and mental health (Seedat, MacKenzie & Stevens, 2004). Seedat et al. (2004) observe that content analysis has been used in South Africa to highlight both trends in publications and the relationship between formal knowledge production and the socio-

political trends at any particular time. Graham and Ismail (2011) emphasise the importance of analysing trends in research, as sub-disciplines such as community psychology are subject to constant speculation.

In the context of educational psychology, community psychology and inclusive education can be brought together. Pillay (2008) combined these aspects in an article where he attempted to explore community educational psychology for the first time. The parallels between community educational psychology and educational psychology have also been explored by Nel, Lazarus and Daniels (2010). Community psychology is based on various values that underpin the concept. These values include empowerment, which is based on community and/or citizen participation. Prevention is also seen as a value of community psychology, by identifying and addressing systematic problems that affect well-being. This connects it to the goal of health promotion. Exclusion and oppression are further areas where community psychology places its focus. One can look at problems and address them through the lens of any of these values (Nel et al., 2010). The lens of inclusion is used in this study.

Community psychology aims to broaden accessibility to psychological services, especially among previously marginalised subsets of the population. This can be regarded as an attempt to promote inclusion in psychology, further emphasising the fact that inclusion is a shared value.

Formalised community psychology began to gather momentum in South Africa in the 1980s amidst oppressive political and contextual factors. Theoretical disciplinary shifts acted as catalysts for the rise of community psychology (Reich et al., 2017). This remains a new and small area of psychology. One of the initial arguments of those in favour of community psychology was that it

shifts psychology from a medical model and moves the discipline to the adoption of a more holistic and contextual view of the client. Community psychology was to become an alternative to mainstream psychology in South Africa as a result of the widespread political injustice and violence that the country experienced. A need for an approach that could reach more people was recognised, leading to a movement away from individualised psychological support as few people had the access or resources to make use of it. Certain values influenced and continue to influence community psychology to this day. These values include social justice, empowerment, ecological frameworks, a focus on the marginalised, and prevention. With an increase in the teaching of community psychology at both undergraduate and postgraduate level at mostly historically Black and historically white English universities, the number of community psychology courses at undergraduate level began to diminish. This was because critical psychology occupied the foreground with a focus on trends such as feminism, postcolonialism, and critical race theories (Reich et al., 2017). Although critical and community psychology are not mutually exclusive, and in fact complement each other, community psychology modules are less evident than during the 1980s. Today, many psychologists view community psychology as an approach to psychology rather than a field on its own. They believe that the systemic or ecological methods and its focus on social justice are aspects that should be present in every psychological sub-discipline; they should not be isolated and contained only in community psychology. Reich et al. (2017) argue that in the research context of community psychology, a focus on topics such as violence, gender studies, psychosocial experience and impacts of race, HIV/AIDS, and physical disability has remained dominant.

Values similar to those emphasised in community psychology were again highlighted and in the wave of change sweeping education almost a decade later, they were reframed in the form of inclusive education. The Salamanca Statement was formalised in 1994 and today serves as the baseline for inclusive education and the philosophy surrounding it. This statement emphasises that every person, regardless of their abilities or needs, is entitled to receive education with their peers (Tchintcharauli & Javakhishvili, 2017).

Under apartheid, children with “special needs” were separated and placed in separate schools. These schools catered mainly for white children (Engelbrecht, 2006), leading to a large number of Black¹, “special needs” children with no option for schooling. The division into these schools was also largely based largely on the medical model, with children being diagnosed and placed in schools according to their diagnosis. As a result of this segregated nature of the education system under the apartheid regime, changes were instituted from 1994 when the education system moved to a unitary, non-racial system (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001). This decision was based on the desire to improve and uphold human rights, and was not focused solely on an education perspective. This move entailed a more holistic view that focused not only on educational rights of the individual, but on his/her basic human rights. The new education system was focused on the education of all children up to certain minimum levels. These levels, systems and policies allowed for children with “special needs” to be included in “mainstream” education. Segregation was abolished, not only in terms of race, but in terms of special needs/non-special needs as well, according to the policies (Engelbrecht, 2006). The view taken of

¹ The term “Black” in this context refers to individuals of Black, Coloured or Indian descent.

these children also changed, as the movement away from the medical model in psychology gave way for a more ecological model, where the barriers to learning were regarded as not only existing at an individual level *in* children but in fact was owing to an interaction between children and their environments (Engelbrecht, 2006). This focus on interaction includes areas such as socio-economic barriers, acceptance of diversity, exposure to violence, and the organisation and provision of the education system. This interaction with the environment became the focus of inquiry and intervention (Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001).

Attitudes to inclusion seen currently in South Africa appear to differ. Certain schools have successfully included children with barriers to learning in their classrooms, while other schools shy away from the inclusion of children with barriers such as physical disabilities and more “severe” disorders in their classrooms. Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001) observe that there is a drive to use various strategies to improve the well-being of all members in the education system, and it centres on the concept of inclusion.

Globally, the concept of inclusive education has been placed at the forefront of educational psychology. Inclusive education varies from areas of inclusion based on physical disability and special education needs, to inclusion as a principled approach to education and society. It is in the latter that we can see that inclusion can act as a value within education (and therefore educational psychology), and society (community psychology) (Van Mieghem, Verschueren, Petry & Struyf, 2018).

Community Psychology

Fowler and Toro (2008) argue that the importance of documenting the movement and history of community psychology is increasing as the field is expanding. They believe that it is important to understand the history and development of a certain field if one is to evaluate and understand any movement.

Graham and Ismail (2011) conducted a study of the content and method trends in the *Journal of Community Psychology* (JCP) between 2003 and 2007. They condensed their categories and data into a set of 16 categories of trends that were reflected in the journal over this time period. In order of most to least commonly occurring themes, they included mental health and mental illness, sense of community and social support, dynamics of social exclusion, child, youth and family development, intervention execution and intervention, abuse and violence, neighbourhood characteristics, civic participation, substance use and abuse, trauma, sexual outcomes and HIV/AIDS, physical health and illness, media use and effects, crime and fear of crime, scale development and testing, and disasters and national emergency. One of the important deductions they made from their study was that community psychology research was increasing, indicating an increase in research interest and/or capacity within community psychology. As in the study conducted by Seedat et al. (2004), Graham and Ismail (2011) found that most studies were initially focused on conventional scientific methodologies such as experimental designs. This changed with a movement towards quasi-experimental designs and a focus on more qualitative studies. Graham and Ismail (2011) also determined that a decrease in empirical study output took place in that timeframe, which they

suggested might point to a stagnation in knowledge production in the field of community psychology. The methodological approach that was most prominent was positivist studies. These researchers also found that action research and participatory studies as research designs were scarce, which was counter-intuitive when one considers the origins of community psychology. This suggested that community psychology was increasingly using traditional research methods, even when considering community interventions.

Angelique and Culley (2000) investigated the way in which women are represented in community psychology journals. They studied the *American Journal of Community Psychology* and the *Journal of Community Psychology* in a timeframe of 1973 to 1997. They found various trends in the research that related to women. They found that articles were dominated by studies on mental health, gender roles, violence against women, and motherhood. Studies relating to mental health dealt mostly with psychological symptomology, with reference to psychological stress, distress, loneliness, schizophrenia, and coping. Studies also focused on social support, depression, systems of mental health focusing on community mental health centres and mental health services. There was some focus on relaxation and counsellors' perceptions of welfare recipients. The articles dealing with motherhood dealt with social support, single parent households, help-seeking behaviour, parent education and training, childcare needs, parenting of disabled children, and birth planning (Angelique & Culley, 2000).

Articles focusing on violence against women reported on the areas of rape and assault, domestic assault, general crime, and child sexual abuse. A large number of the articles also dealt with resources and services that were available

to women. Perceptions of violence towards women, prevention strategies and historical and cultural implications were also investigated, as were empowerment and prevention of child sexual abuse. Systems analysis was another trend that was reflected in these journals, but rape was dealt with in only a few articles. When the articles were classified as feminist articles, they would often look at violence within a socio-political context (Angelique & Culley, 2000).

Schruijer and Stephenson (2010) studied the *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology (JCASP)* between the years of 1991-2010. They found a substantial number of themes covered in the journal over the years but were able ultimately to narrow these themes down to a smaller number that were covered consistently. The themes they identified could be broadly placed in three categories. These categories were ethnicity, sexuality, and addiction. Themes included in the ethnicity category were immigration and acculturation, ethnic identity, racism, multiculturalism, and prejudice. Schruijer and Stephenson (2010) argued that the reason behind this list of topics was the influence of social psychology on the journal articles. They highlighted themes of sexual abuse, healthy/unhealthy sexual practices, and sexual identity in the sexuality category. Lastly, the category of addiction included themes such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and gambling addiction. They found, however, that research in the third category of addiction started to taper off and decreased as time went by. Other trends in research were bullying, crime and violence, with research into unemployment, body weight, and homelessness also featuring at intervals.

Schruijer and Stephenson (2010) also established that themes such as animal welfare, sport and leisure, pollution, resource depletion and pandemics were absent during the timeframe of their study. When investigating the most frequently used research designs in the JCASP, they found that both quantitative and qualitative studies were present, with the balance tipping slightly towards qualitative research. Data collection techniques included interviews, focus groups, documents, texts, observations, experiments, surveys and questionnaires. One method that appeared to be gaining ground was discourse analysis. One particular trend they found was the increasing use of different types of research designs in the journal (Schruijer & Stephenson, 2010). They suggested that this might point to greater interdisciplinary integration, with specific research designs not being predominantly grouped with specific psychological fields. No correlation was therefore found between a certain psychological field, whether it be clinical, educational or counselling, and a specific research design. This was also the case when Pillay (2008) pointed out that community educational psychology focused on pluralistic research methods.

Seedat, MacKenzie and Stevens (2004) identified five broad categories to explore in terms of trends in community psychology research. They conducted a content analysis of the *South African Journal of Psychology (SAJP)* and the journal *Psychology in Society (PINS)*. Their study investigated the content of the articles published between 1994 and 2003. They found that relevance, appropriateness and scope of psychology were most frequently present, followed by mental health policy and services, specific mental health and psychosocial issues, gender specific issues, and race specific issues (Seedat,

MacKenzie & Stevens, 2004). The category of mental health policy that was reported frequently in psychology as a profession, contributed to the reformulation of health and the psychological needs of victims of the apartheid regime needed. The specific mental health and psychosocial issues category was characterised by articles addressing violence, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy and suicide. Gender and race issues were reported the least, and referred at that time as a marginalised group in terms of psychological research.

Seedat et al. (2004) investigated the nature of community psychology scholarship in journals. They found that most articles reported on empirical studies, followed by theoretical, review and descriptive type studies. Theoretical studies dealt with postmodern and critical paradigmatic approaches that aimed to reformulate psychological theory and research. These studies also explored the role of community psychology as support in the social transformation movement. Descriptive studies dealt mostly with issues that related to programme development and implementation. In both cases, studies were aimed at community psychology practitioners with the aim to generate discourse and debate on the direction of community psychology in the new South Africa. Seedat et al. (2004) found a growing complexity in the field of community psychology as it attempted to develop alternative theories and to provide empirical evidence in support of the community psychology field.

The following section focuses on thematic trends, research design and method trends found in inclusive education research.

Inclusive education

Engelbrecht (2006) investigated the way in which inclusive school communities could be developed to fit a South African context. She employed both qualitative

and quantitative research methodologies. These methods included questionnaires containing Likert scale-based questions and open-ended questions.

Ferguson (2008) argued that the initial debate surrounding inclusive education was structural and focused on where students with disabilities were to receive education. They presented two arguments: the first argument was that to be inclusive, abled and disabled students should be educated together. The argument in this case was based on political and social justice discourse. The second argument was that education for abled and disabled children should be separate, as the needs of children are unique and disabled students need specialised settings where their needs can be fully met. The adherents of this argument believed that disabled children in non-disabled classrooms would not learn effectively and this would be detrimental to their learning process. As we know now, many countries have their own policies based on these arguments; some countries advocate an inclusive setting in which all children receive education in the same classroom, and others running a parallel stream for children in need of special education. The degree of connection and collaboration between the streams differ from country to country.

Ferguson (2008) argues that the trends in inclusive education research are evolving with time. She notes that UNESCO researchers have found that the approach should move towards identifying disability separately from diagnosis, with particular focus on the assessment of the interaction between student and school environment. This shift would move the focus from the student's "problem" to the relationship between the child's ability and the education environment.

In another study, Wilhelmsen and Sørensen (2017) looked at trends in the inclusion of children with physical disabilities in Physical Education classrooms. They looked at the methods used in studies as well as at main themes that could be identified. They considered these trends from a stakeholder perspective and divided them into different groups from there.

Stakeholders' acceptance and positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities was the most common topics for research. Other common topics, in descending order of frequency, were as follows: initial teacher training and disability simulation, skill acquisition, mental health, physical fitness and activity, state of affairs of APE and inclusive PE, different teaching strategies in PE and learning conditions, collaboration, roles, and responsibilities within the teacher team, governmental policy and national curriculum, self-efficacy and perceived preparedness to teach, parental involvement, experience with disability sport, online education, and the built environment in schools (Wilhelmsen & Sørensen, 2017).

Wilhelmsen and Sørensen (2017) found in their study that the quantitative approach was used most widely, followed by qualitative and mixed methods approaches respectively. They found that cross-sectional survey design was the most commonly employed quantitative method. Interviews were used most in a qualitative framework.

Van Mieghem, Verschueren, Petry and Struyf (2018) conducted a thematic content analysis of the themes and methodology used in inclusive education research. They identified 26 reviews for their content analysis. Four major themes, prevalent in reviews, were identified. These were attitudes towards

inclusive education, professional development in inclusive education, inclusive education practices, and student participation.

The content analysis conducted by Van Miegheem, Verschueren, Petry & Struyf (2018) also considered research design trends reflected in the reviews. Mixed methods was the most prevalent research design, used in 14 of the 26 reviews. This was followed by quantitative methods, used ten times, and two reviews that explored qualitative methodology.

Emmers et al. (2019) place their focus on the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education as part of the process towards inclusion. They argue that the creation of an inclusive culture is of great importance as it is only within such a culture that true inclusion can take place. They believe that an inclusive culture can only be created by positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Negative attitudes towards students with disabilities leads to a lack of support programmes such as learner accommodations (Emmers et al., 2019). In contrast, positive attitudes toward inclusive education can lead to better learning environments and more successful teaching strategies. Emmers et al. (2019) do believe, however, that a lack of research into the connection between a teacher's self-efficacy and attitude, and behaviour toward learners with disabilities, exists. They found a dearth of positive attitudes and self-efficacy in teachers, specifically in higher education. Emmers et al. (2019) believe that this is because higher education aims for greater inclusion based on legislation and the number of learners with disabilities.

Kirby (2016) conducted a content study in which she explored research on inclusion. She found that numerous studies reported that when children with learning difficulties are included in classrooms with their peers, they are more

likely to show improvement in their ability to read and write. This study compared these results to those of a class of learners comprising only children with learning difficulties. When the studies were extended to high school learners, the researchers found that children who were included in a classroom with their peers improved significantly more in their mathematics, social studies and science results than those who were placed in the special education classroom. The learners in the inclusive classroom also reported lower absenteeism. Kirby (2016) found that certain steps taken to achieve true inclusion were common in the selected studies. These included the abolition of labels, individualised instruction, authentic assessment and teacher preparation. Kirby (2016) argues that teacher education should be adapted to facilitate the empowerment of teachers with skills and tools necessary to include all learners in their classrooms.

Alves (2019) argues that the trend towards developing more inclusive education systems has put pressure on governments to create new policies to drive this process. Alves' (2019) study, which was conducted in Portugal, found that teachers should be challenged to question their own ideas about diversity, to reconsider the role of schools, and to find ways of working collaboratively with each other. Alves (2019) recommends that teacher education should include the three concepts of knowing, doing and believing; it should include knowing about the context of the policies, classroom management strategies, teaching strategies, understanding the process and assessment of learning, and identifying difficulties and addressing them (Alves, 2019).

Overall, trends in inclusive education research is an area that has not received much attention within the academic community. The concern that this raises is

the fact that teacher preparation is lacking in inclusive education (Engelbrecht, 2006). This in turn raises the concern that without adequate stocktaking of knowledge production and focus within the field, the necessary changes and evolution of inclusive education may be hampered.

The following section explores the trends in research design and methodology found in educational psychology research.

Educational Psychology

Educational psychology has had difficulties distinguishing itself from other, more distinct, fields with which it overlaps (Nolen, 2009). Educational psychology was originally an amalgamation of various fields, including philosophy, psychology and education (Alexander, 2018). This has led to research in the educational psychology field often being credited to other fields. Nolen (2009) observes that initial strands in educational psychology research were focused on four aspects: the learner, the learning/teaching process, the teacher, and the assessment of learning. Trends emerged in the '80s, however, moving the focus to issues of a more practical nature. These included issues to do with teachers, teaching, learning, and curriculum. During that time, research focused more on theory validation than on their practical implications in the classroom.

Nolen (2009) studied six journals across the period 2003-2007 to determine the most common trends in educational psychology research. She found that classroom achievement, learning and memory, affective/motivation beliefs, and cognition/reasoning were the top four topic categories that were most frequently present in the top five journals she selected. This indicates that the topic categories were fairly constant in journals. There was just one exception to this

general trend in educational psychology. One of the journals she investigated was the *Journal of Educational Psychology (JEP)*. In the *JEP*, the most common topic was literacy. The *JEP* was therefore unique in its focus when one considers the other five journals, as literacy was ranked 14th of the topics most frequently seen in other journals.

The consistency of topics in the journals indicated that there was some consensus on research topics that are the focus of educational psychology. Areas that Nolen (2009) highlighted as being underrepresented were educational technology and the learning environment. The argument was also made that with the advances made in technology and the focus on this in schools, research should focus more on these categories. A factor that might have influenced the lack of representation of technology in schools was that articles that did deal with this content might have been published in journals that did not focus on educational psychology. Educational assessment was another category that was underreported in journals. Given the focus on assessment at all the various levels of education, this may point to a lack of knowledge in that area.

Powell, Mihalas, Onwuegbuzie, Suldo and Daley (2008) investigated the application of mixed-method research in school psychology. They describe research in social and behavioural sciences as having developed in three methodological waves. These waves each characterise a certain period. The first wave characterises the traditional science period, the second wave the crisis period and the third wave, the current synthesis period (Powell et al., 2008). Research conducted during the traditional science period adopted research approaches such as the scientific method, and focused mainly on

quantitative methods. The crisis period experienced a rejection of the scientific method, with the sole focus on objective data. During this period researchers argued that individuals had subjective ideas and worldviews. This resulted in a paradigm shift towards qualitative studies. The synthesis period is described by Powell et al. (2008) as a period in which quantitative and qualitative research designs were combined in social and behavioural research.

Thus, the current focus is on mixed methods. Powell et al. (2008) argue, however, that no studies have investigated the use of a mixed methods approach in school or educational psychology.

Powell et al. (2008) contend that school psychologists use mixed methods in their assessments as the school psychologist is always aware of both the qualitative and quantitative observations that can be made during assessment. For this reason, they argue that mixed methods should be more widely used in schools and consequently in educational psychology research as well. They conducted a study in which they investigated four journals published between 2001 and 2005 (Powell et al., 2008). They focused only on the presence of mixed-method studies compared to quantitative and qualitative studies. They found that quantitative studies remained the most prominent, with qualitative and mixed-methods second and third respectively. They also found, however, that mixed-methods research increased between 2001 and 2005. In their study, Dumas, Singer Trakhman and Alexander (2015) found that mixed-methods research design was a method that potentially was more comprehensive and could produce more nuanced results.

Dumas et al. (2015) studied the trends and the movement of these trends in educational psychology research. They divided trends into stationary,

incremental, and iterative trends. Stationary trends refer to those that have remained relatively stable over time. Incremental trends are those that develop exponentially over time, and iterative trends may disappear from research or discourse only to re-emerge with a new generation of researchers. They found that individual differences in diverse cognitive variables such as memory and attention, development on the part of educational psychologists and a focus on the measurement of abilities in educational psychology were the trends that seemed to remain stable over time and could be categorised as stationary trends. They found that empirical research falls within the stationary category of how we study. Empirical research encompasses various research designs and includes quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methodology research.

Incremental trends were found to be leaning towards techniques that could better ensure validity and reliability. This meant that a movement away from observational and interview-based techniques was apparent (Dumas et al., 2015); this presented obstacles to researchers when dealing with validity and reliability. Dumas et al. (2015) found incremental trends in educational psychology research to be focused on two areas: growth in discipline specific terminology, and the burgeoning of methodological techniques. Growth in discipline specific terminology is a phenomenon that arises from the linguistic distinction between disciplines. An overreliance on the creation of discipline specific terminology may create confusion as such terminology may become self-contradictory.

The burgeoning of methodological techniques occurs because educational psychologists constantly increase their understanding of educational and psychological phenomena. The need to improve this understanding is believed

to be the reason behind the increasing development in and use of various methodologies (Dumas et al., 2015). The focus has shifted from older techniques such as observation to more reliable and valid methodologies and types of analysis such as multilevel analysis.

Iterative trends appear and disappear from research over time. Such trends are the rational for conducting studies, how research should be conducted and what the conclusions should be. Dumas et al. (2015) observe that these trends in research occur in different forms at different points in time.

This literature review that I conducted indicates that although studies of trends in inclusive education have been conducted, the results are contradictory in specific areas. Research into methodological trends with a focus on quantitative methods poses fewer contradictions. In addition, a shift towards mixed-methods research has been reflected in research. This creates an opportunity in for further studies in this area in an attempt to explore the trends and methodologies used in inclusive education research. This will be done in this study using the methodology presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Methodology

Introduction

The aim of Chapter 3 is to describe and discuss the methodology employed in this study. The aim of the study was to identify ways in which inclusion is presented as a value in community educational psychology research. To this end, the study used a post-positivist paradigm. Using this method, the researcher was able to identify if and how the value of inclusion was reflected in research in a selection of journals publishing articles on community psychology and inclusive education.

Paradigm

The research paradigm and methodology impact mutually. Therefore, the methodology is based on the view of knowledge, reality and values that the paradigm enforces. In this study a post-positivist paradigm was used. Post-positivism is considered by some as the dominant paradigm within psychology and the social sciences (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). Post-positivism emphasises meanings and aims to explain social concerns. It is a broad paradigm that allows the bringing together of theory and practice (Henderson, 2011).

Post positivism evolved from positivism. Positivism states that the only way to establish truth and objective reality is through scientific methods; therefore, science is the only true foundation of knowledge (Wagner, Kawulich, Garner & Botha, 2012). Positivism is founded on the notion that knowledge is based in experience. It is thus focused on the facts and origins of behaviour. The positivist framework sees objects as independent, with their own meaning and

existence that is separate from our consciousness of them. A change in positivism occurred when scientists began to move away from absolute certainty to the realms of probability (Wagner et al., 2012). They acknowledged the influence of the researcher in the creation of knowledge, as opposed to the positivist idea that the researcher is completely removed and merely transcribing information he or she has observed. Although post-positivism and positivism postulate that reality is independent and can be studied, post-positivism is focused more closely on theory falsification. From the viewpoint of post-positivism, an observation can be made but it cannot be stated that the theory is the absolute truth. Post-positivism can therefore be understood as a paradigm that focuses on theory falsification rather than theory verification (Wagner et al., 2012).

Wagner et al. (2012) argue that post-positivism is based on the concept that the researcher is not an objective viewer of the truth and thus cannot be absolutely certain about anything. Nelson and Prilleltensky (2010) observe that the post-positivist paradigm maintains that a single, external reality exists that can be understood only imperfectly. In post-positivism, certainty has been replaced by probability, and the results of research are based on a high probability of the event occurring for certain reasons. Critical realism is a philosophical influence on post-positivism. An important aspect of critical realism is that reality cannot be confirmed as a certainty and that in any research or set of observations there are various influences. This critical realism helps to inform the ontological basis of post-positivism: reality does indeed exist, but it can never be known perfectly as the influence of the researcher's biases, viewpoints and limitations prevent it from being known completely. The

epistemology of post-positivism maintains that the researcher and the research object are relatively independent of one another, while positivism holds that the research must be objective and value free. Post-positivism, however, acknowledges the influence that the researcher and the research object have on one another (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). It is important that safeguards are put in place as to reduce the effects of these influences. This will ensure that the researcher's bias does not influence the research or the understanding of the phenomenon being studied. For this reason, Wagner et al. (2012) maintain that the researcher can only know reality based on a certain level of probability.

The post-positivist paradigm is based on various views surrounding the creation of knowledge. It focuses on this creation of new knowledge of concepts supporting social movements, therefore acting as a theoretical framework for social justice movements. Research within the post-positivist paradigm is broad, with various areas. In relation to this, the epistemology of post-positivism entails that research is mainly conducted quantitatively through quasi-experimental, experimental, correlational studies, causal comparisons and survey methods. These inform the types of information gathering techniques used, such as questionnaires, surveys, observations and content analyses. In this study I relied on content analysis as the method of information gathering and used a quantitative methodology. In this way I adhered to the research norms of the post-positivist paradigm. Inclusion can be seen as a form of social justice as it relates to the fair and equitable treatment of all groups. The methodology and content of this study will therefore be informed by a post-positivist paradigm. I have also focused on the incidence of a concept, i.e.

inclusion, and themes concerning inclusion that occur in selected journals containing articles on inclusive education and community psychology research.

Research Methodology

The method chosen for this research study was content analysis. Content analysis is described as important in any field (Mastropieri et al., 2009). This is true in the case of education as research articles are often the basis on which textbooks are written, and are frequently used when policies are discussed and created. Professional journals are also used when evidence-based practice is developed.

Content analysis is described by Krippendorff (2013, p. 18) as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use”. Krippendorff (1989) describes content analysis as one of the most important research techniques because it seeks to analyse data in the context in which a certain group of people attribute meaning to it. Content analysis is also chosen as a method in cases where there is a great deal of data to analyse (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto, 2015). Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2015) argue that quantitative content analysis can be used both for description and for prediction. Description entails a focus on the features of the content. Prediction is focused on predictions of the outcome of the messages that are being analysed. In this study, I focused on descriptive content analysis. I studied the data through a lens of inclusion and determined how this concept is reflected in research. I identified themes in the data that reflected the way in which the notion of inclusion is reflected. The meaning given to the themes by the research community was explored initially; I

therefore focused on a thematic content analysis. Maguire and Delahunt (2017) describe thematic analysis as the identification of patterns and themes in qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a method rather than a methodology, which allows it to be flexible and adaptable to the particular study in which it is used (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

The research focused on various areas. These included the prevalence of research on inclusion, and the nature of inclusion in terms of certain themes. The methods used in community psychology research was also explored. Themes in inclusion and community educational psychology research were highlighted, and the methods used this research study.

During content analysis, two types of information can be identified: latent and manifest content. Manifest content is sometimes referred to as semantic content (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Manifest content is the content that can be perceived in the visible, countable components of the text. Latent content, on the other hand, refers to the subliminal information in the text, which the manifest content infers (Rose, Spinks & Canhoto, 2015). Content analysis can also be used to determine the substantive and form features of a text. The substantive features refer to the features of the content, while form features are the formal features of the text. In this study the focus was on the manifest content and the substantive features of the text.

Content analysis has been used in both community psychology research and educational psychology research. Boyd and Angelique (2002) used content analysis in their community psychology study in which they tried to determine the extent of the effect of community psychology research on the study of organisations. They found that individuals function within organisational

communities and these communities act as our professional neighbourhoods. Boyd and Angelique (2002) observed that community psychologists are important factors in organisational cultures, as they are able to explore areas such as diversity, empowerment, sense of community, stress and coping mechanisms. These professionals help people to achieve and lead fulfilling lives. As in my study, Boyd and Angelique (2002) used specific sampling to isolate articles that were coded by certain terms that were applicable to their study. They then isolated articles that highlighted the themes of diversity, empowerment, sense of community, stress and coping mechanisms. This differed from the present study in the fact that the researchers had already selected the themes they were exploring. In this study the themes were revealed as the process evolved.

Bernal and Echautegui-de-Jesus (1994) conducted a content analysis of the representation of Latinos and Latinas in community psychology research. Their study was similar to the present study as they also sought to explore the prevalence of certain themes in the literature.

Nolen (2009) used content analysis in her study to explore the way in which educational psychology research was being conducted and the trends in educational psychology research that were present at that time. She first searched for journals that contained certain keywords, and then examined articles in these journals to identify trends. These trends were grouped into categories that encompassed various overlapping trends in the articles. Nolen (2009) found that topics that were most common in educational psychology research included classroom achievement, learning and memory, affective/motivational/belief factors and cognition/reasoning. This suggested

that there was an understanding or a collective agreement between educational psychologists on the topics of study within this particular field. The diversity of topics also led her to the conclusion that educational psychology has no specific core belief (Nolen, 2009).

Graham and Ismail (2011) researched topic and method trends using a content analysis. They categorised existing trend analysis into two subtypes. The first subtype comprises research that studied general epistemological and methodological trends (Schruijer & Stephenson, 2010; Kim et al., 2014) during a short timeframe of 5-10 years. The second subtype includes studies that focus on a specific, in-depth investigation of a predetermined focal area over a longer period of 20-30 years. These areas can include gender issues (Wasco & Bond, 2010; Angelique & Culley, 2003), historical patterns (Dumas et al., 2015; Fowler & Toro, 2008; Seedat et al., 2004) and cultural diversity (Bernal & Echautegui-de-Jesus, 1994).

Graham and Ismail (2011) looked specifically at trends in publication type, participant characteristics, and article topics. Their study was focused on the patterns observed in knowledge production, and they considered how change, absence and contradictions were treated in the literature, and how these factors impacted community psychology as a whole. Graham and Ismail (2011) argue that topic trends can be indicative of the specific areas that are important to that field at a certain point in history.

The data set used by Graham and Ismail (2011) comprised articles published in the *Journal of Community Psychology* over a four-year period, 2003-2007. Their first step was coding the abstracts using both inductive and deductive coding strategies. Deductive coding is based on the use of predetermined

categories. Publication type and method were coded for using deductive coding. Inductive coding allows codes to emerge from the data; this was used to code the categories of research topic and participant characteristics.

Graham and Ismail (2011) found that most studies were empirical, conducted using positivist methodologies and consisting of both male and female participants. The majority of studies focused on mixed cultural groups, ethnicity, or nationality. The top five topics were mental health and mental illness, sense of community and social support, dynamics of social exclusion, child, youth and family development, and intervention execution and evaluation. Overall, Graham and Ismail (2011) found that there was still considerable reliance on the medical model. This is in contrast to the concept of the community in community psychology.

Messiou (2017) conducted a study of issues of the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* published between the years 2005-2015. This study was focused on the methodologies and the topics that were prevalent in inclusive education research. All articles published in the specified timeframe were considered for the study. They found that physical disability was the commonest topic, followed by special needs, and finally a combination of physical disability and special needs. An important finding in this study was that only 8% of all the articles studied related to children or diversity. Messiou (2017) argued that this was concerning as these are areas that are regarded as most important when considering inclusive education.

Most studies in Messiou's (2017) study were qualitative in nature. Based on the data, he raised a further concern that only 3% of all studies were collaborative in nature. Collaborative studies are described as those that employ active

participation at multiple levels, from the study design to data gathering and analysis. In Messiou's (2017) study, the most common type of research after qualitative studies was literature-based studies.

Messiou (2017) sums up his research by stating that most studies are still focused on specific groups or subsections of the student population. This runs counter to the concept of inclusion as there may be other sections or groups of learners who are struggling and are being overlooked.

Nilholm and Göransson (2017) used content analysis in their study focusing on the meaning of inclusion in research. The study was focused on research from North America and Europe. They chose the 30 most cited articles from North America and from Europe that included the keyword *inclus* in the abstracts of the World of Science and Scopus databases. They found that the meaning of inclusion was largely lacking in clarity, with very few studies revealing a shared understanding of the meaning of inclusion. They also found that the definition of inclusion sometimes varied within articles.

Mastropieri et al. (2009) conducted research on the content of 11 prominent journals in special education. They selected journals on the most visible journals in the field, based on circulation rates, memberships and publication acceptance rates. They categorised their results according to the overall findings of the journals, types of articles, types of research and types of intervention research. They found that research studies were most commonly published, followed by position papers, editorials, reviews and practice papers. In the case of types of research they found that descriptive research was

employed most often, followed by intervention research on learners from preschool to grade 12, survey research, qualitative or case study research, and lastly intervention research on learners not between preschool and grade 12 (Mastropieri et al., 2009). The samples used in intervention research were explored in particular detail, and Mastropieri et al. (2009) found that in studies that focused primarily on disabilities, a combination of disabilities was most common. In the articles dealing with a single disability category, the highest representative group was those with learning disabilities, followed by intellectual disabilities/developmental disabilities, emotional behavioural disabilities, at risk, autism, other health impairments and, lastly, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Mastropieri et al. (2009) found, however, that this focus shifted between 1988 and 1992, mainly to learning difficulties.

Research in the fields of inclusive education and community psychology suggests that content analysis is widely used, and therefore appropriate in the present study.

Population and Sampling

The main research question in this study is “What content and methods themes and trends concerning inclusion emerge as central to community educational psychology in three South African education journals?”

The sub-questions are:

What trends in inclusion research in community educational psychology are evident in selected journals published between 2013 and 2017?

What research designs, methods and theories are employed in community educational psychology literature focusing on inclusion in selected journals published between 2013 and 2017?

What commonalities and differences with regard to inclusion in community educational psychology scholarship and established practice are reflected in the identified journals?

In order to answer these questions, the study identified themes arising from journal articles in the fields of South African community psychology and educational psychology. The population of a study refers to the sample used. In this case, the population consisted of three journals, with publication dates within a specific timeframe. The population comprised South African academic journals only, as this study aimed to determine the content and method trends in South African publications. They included the *South African Journal of Psychology*, the *Journal of Education* and the journal *Education as Change*, and covered issues published between the years 2013 and 2017. These journals were chosen as they are South Africa's leading journals in the disciplines of psychology and educational psychology. Editorials, editors' notes and reviews were excluded from the study as they did not represent original empirical research.

The first step in sampling was to isolate specific articles that were published in the journals between 2013 and 2017. The timeframe was based on the fact that the study commenced in 2018. Therefore, the preceding five years were chosen for the study, as I wished to focus on recent research. The article titles were then screened for the terms "inclusion" or "inclusive education". In addition, the selected articles' abstracts were screened. If these abstracts stated that the

article fell into the category of education, including schools, communities and universities, the articles were selected for the study. Articles that did not fall into either of these categories were excluded from the study.

In the period between 2013 and 2017, the *South African Journal of Psychology* published volumes 43 to 47, containing a total of 227 articles. The *Journal of Education* published volumes 55 to 67, containing a total of 95 articles. The journal *Education as Change* published volumes 17 to 21, containing 147 articles. A total of 469 articles was therefore selected for this research study. The number of articles decreased as articles were excluded because they did not include the term “inclusion” or “inclusive education” within their abstracts.

Some shortcomings of content analysis have been noted in the literature. For instance, Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2015) hold that there are weaknesses in the content analysis method. These include the fact that document availability and the sampling process may introduce bias, as may the interpretation and coding, and the focus on certain terms and phrases may lead to the overlooking of certain themes. These weaknesses are dealt with in the case of this study by the fact that the sampling was very specific, and the study had a quantitative focus. The potential bias was reduced by the process of selection of the articles. They were first screened for the presence of certain key words, after which the abstracts were screened to ensure that the article fell into the broad theme of education. Each individual article was then read in its entirety and coded to ensure the extraction of arguments dealing with inclusion, as well as the methodology that was used in the study.

Coding

Stemler (2001) names two methods of coding used in content analysis. These are emergent and *a priori* coding. Emergent coding takes place when a group of categories is not established before the research study commences. It involves two researchers initially examining the data and establishing a tentative group of categories. The researchers then compile, compare and resolve discrepancies in their categories. The next step entails the researchers coding the data independently and establishing reliability. Once reliability has been established, the researchers move to full scale coding of the data.

A priori coding refers to a process in which researchers establish categories before the study begins. These categories are continuously examined and revised to ensure that the study is as effective and reliable as possible (Stemler, 2001).

Various units can be used in content analysis. These include sampling, context and recording units. Sampling units are determined by how the researcher infers meaning (Stemler, 2001). They can therefore include paragraphs, words, sentences or parts of text, such as abstracts. Context units do not need to be independent or separately describable. This means that units are limited only by physical sets of limits, such as being limited to paragraphs or sentences. Recording units are defined not according to their physical boundaries but rather to ideas and concepts belonging to a specific area of data (Stemler, 2001).

In this study, an adapted form of emergent coding was used to identify themes in the data. The coding took place as the data were reviewed. This differed from other studies as themes are identified before the review process is undertaken.

In this study, themes were noted, and a quantitative count took place as themes were encountered during the reviewing of the articles. The list of themes was initially fairly large, with new themes being added as the research continued. Review was ongoing during the process so as to keep the number of themes within the required limit. The same process was followed when considering the methods used in research as reflected in these journal articles.

Reliability in quantitative content analysis is reflected in a value that relates to inter-coder agreement (Strijbos, Martens, Prins & Jochems, 2006). This was achieved through the coding by me and my supervisor.

After the coding categories had been determined, conceptual content analysis was used to count the themes. The abstracts were coded, and the numerical information gathered from the coding was tabulated. The information was then used for analysis in which descriptive statistics were derived and presented to show the frequencies and prevalence of specific themes and research designs and methods.

Results were presented in tabular form. Themes, research designs and methods were presented in separate tables.

Ethics

No ethical clearance was needed for this research study as it used articles that had already been published. The authors of the secondary studies were named, with no information of the primary subjects or researchers included.

Resnik (2011) provides three reasons why adherence to ethical norms is important in research. The first principle is based on the fact that ethical norms

help to promote certain aims of research such as truth, avoidance of error, and knowledge. Secondly, ethical standards help to foster relationships between disciplines through emphasising values such as accountability, fairness and respect. The third reason for adhering to ethical norms is that researchers hold themselves accountable to the public and their peers.

Guillemin and Gillam (2004) state that various ethical principles should be adhered to. In their study, the focus was on the ethics surrounding human participants, but various principles can be adapted and applied to this study. The first of these is procedural ethics. Procedural ethics is characterised by the correct application to, and clearance by, ethical boards. Although this was not required in this study, I had to think about ethics applications deeply. Microethics are ethics that relate to everyday ethical occurrences that may arise in research. Although ethical challenges were not anticipated in this study, I was constantly aware, and gave appropriate consideration to potential ethical dilemmas (Orb, Laurel & Wynaden, 2000). These included the requirement that researchers conduct the research in a manner in which their own ideas, biases and preconceptions do not influence the data they recover. This requires researchers to be aware of their own biases, preconceptions and established ideas about certain factors.

Content analysis was thus used in this study to determine the trends and methodological trends in inclusive education research. A quantitative analysis was conducted to determine the trends in content and method and to explore the areas of focus in research between 2013 and 2017. The results of the analysis are presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 Results

In this study, an analysis of selected articles was conducted, with the focus on particular aspects. These included the number of articles published that fulfilled the selection criteria, the number of articles published in each journal, the number of articles published in certain years, the trends relating to the themes of inclusion and inclusive education research, and trends in methodological approaches.

The selected journals were accessed through the University of Stellenbosch's Library databases. The journals were screened, and book reviews, commentaries and editorials were excluded from the sample group. A total of 227 articles in the *South African Journal of Psychology* met the criteria, and 95 in the *Journal of Education*. The journal *Education as Change* published 147 articles that met the criteria and could be included in the initial sample group. The timeframe of 2013-2017 was used in the screening process. A total of 469 articles was finally selected for the initial sample group.

Further screening then took place: articles that contained the term "inclusion" or "inclusive education" in their abstracts were selected. These articles met the criteria for inclusion in the final sample group. Of the 227 articles published in the *South African Journal of Psychology*, only three contained the terms "inclusion" or "inclusive education" in their abstracts. None of these articles used the terms in the context of this study and could therefore not be included in the sample group.

The *Journal of Education* published 95 articles, excluding book reviews and editorials, in the volumes published between 2013 and 2017. Three of these articles contained the terms "inclusion" or "inclusive education". All three articles

dealt with “inclusion” or “inclusive education” in a school or educational context and could therefore be included in the sample group. In the journal *Education as Change*, a total of 147 articles were screened for the keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”. Seventeen articles contained the keywords used the context of this study and could therefore be included in this study.

Table 1 below reflects the journals, years, authors and number of articles containing the terms “inclusion” or “inclusive education”.

Table 1. Number of articles containing the keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”

Year	Journal	No of keywords	Authors	Total articles in	% of articles that containing keywords
2013	JOE	1	<i> Davids and Waghid (2013)</i>	19	5,26%
	EaC	2	<i> Gous-Kemp (2013) Bush (2013)</i>	32	6,25%
	SAJP	1	<i> Lubbe and Scholtz (2013)</i>	41	2,44%
2014	JOE	0		5	0%
	EaC	4	<i> Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)</i> <i> Erduran and Msimanga (2014)</i> <i> Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)</i> <i> Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)</i>	34	11,76%
	SAJP	0		45	0%
2015	JOE	1	<i> Johnson, Dempster and Hugo (2015)</i>	23	4,35%
	EaC	0		18	0%
	SAJP	0		45	0%

2016	JOE	0		22	0%
	EaC	3	<i>Breshears and Lubbe-De Beer (2016)</i> <i>Sanders and Makotsa (2016)</i> <i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i>	35	8,57%
	SAJP	1	<i>Victor and Nel (2016)</i>	45	2,22%
2017	JOE	1	<i>Walton (2017)</i>	26	3,85%
	EaC	1	<i>Mampaey (2017)</i>	28	3,57%
	SAJP	2	<i>Cassimjee and Motswai (2017)</i> <i>Seedat (2017)</i>	51	3,92%
TOTAL		17		469	3,48%

It is apparent from the screening and sampling process that of the 469 articles that were screened for the predetermined keywords, 17 contained the specific keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”.

The combined publication rate for articles containing these keywords was 17 out of 469. Thus, the percentage of articles focusing on inclusion and inclusive education was 3.62% (Table 1). When considering the separate journals and publication rates for articles on inclusion and inclusive education, the *Journal of Education* showed a publication rate of three out of 95, or 3.15%, which is slightly below the combined total. The *South African Journal of Psychology* showed a publication rate of 0 out of 227. Initially, three articles were selected during screening, but upon further review the articles did not use the terms in the context of inclusion and education, and therefore did not qualify for inclusion in the study. The journal *Education as Change* had a publication rate of 10 out of 147, which equates to a percentage of 6.80%.

Of the total publications, the journal *Education as Change* had the highest general publication rate (2,13%) with 10 of the 469 articles. The *Journal of Education* and the *South African Journal of Psychology* had a similar publication rate (0,64%) of three from 469 articles. The years with the highest publication rates were 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2017 with four articles each. In 2015, only one article was published that met the criteria by including the keywords “inclusion” or “inclusive education”.

These results show that a slight increase in articles containing this content occurred between 2016 and 2017. This suggests that the terms are becoming more widely used, as the increase is seen in all three journals. The data suggest that although there was an increase in research dealing with the terms that were screened for, the amount of research published in these areas was still very low. This is especially concerning as two of the three journals selected focus on education.

Only 11 of the screened articles contained the keywords used in an educational context and could therefore be included in this study.

Table 2. Articles containing keywords, used in an educational context, according to year

Year	Journal	Containing keywords used in educational context	Authors	%
2013	JOE	1	<i>Davids and Waghid (2013)</i>	9,09%
	EaC	1	<i>Gous-Kemp (2013)</i>	9,09%
	SAJP	0		0%
Subtotal				18,18%
2014	JOE	0		0%

	EaC	4	<i>Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)</i> <i>Erduran and Msimanga (2014)</i> <i>Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)</i> <i>Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)</i>	36,36%
	SAJP	0		0%
Subtotal				36,36%
2015	JOE	1	<i>Johnson, Dempster and Hugo (2015)</i>	9,09%%
	EaC	0		0%
	SAJP	0		0%
Subtotal				9,09%
2016	JOE	0		0%
	EaC	2	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i> <i>Sanders and Makotsa (2016)</i>	18,18%
	SAJP	0		0%
Subtotal				18,18%
2017	JOE	1	<i>Walton (2017)</i>	9,09%
	EaC	1	<i>Mampaey (2017)</i>	9,09%
	SAJP	0		0%
Subtotal				18,18%
TOTAL		11		

The articles that contained the keywords used in an educational context are presented in Table 2 above. These results indicate that in 2013 two articles that met the selection criteria were published in the journals. In 2014 four articles were published, and in the year 2015 only one article that met the criteria emerged from the selected journals. In 2016 and 2017, two articles that met the selection criteria were published per year.

Table 3. Publication rates of articles with the keywords “inclusion” and “inclusive education”, per journal, in the period 2013-2017

Journal	N	%
Journal of Education	2	18.2%
Education as Change	9	81.8%
South Africa Journal of Psychology	0	0%

The results further indicate that the journal *Education as Change* had a publication rate of articles meeting the criteria of 81.8%, with the *Journal of Education* constituting the remaining 18.2%. The *South African Journal of Psychology* published no articles that met the criteria and therefore had a publication rate of 0%.

The themes in the articles were explored through coding. This coding revealed a number of themes that were categorised into two main themes, presented in the table below. Some articles focused on several subthemes, which were part of the main themes.

Table 4. Themes and subthemes identified in the 11 selected articles

Main Themes	Subthemes	Authors	N	% of total subthemes	% of main themes
Social Justice	Inclusion	Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014) Erduran and Msimanga (2014) Gous-Kemp (2013)	3	15%	
	Exclusion	Mampaey (2017) Davids and Waghid (2013)	2	10%	
	Transformation	Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)	1	5%	
	Equity	Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)	1	5%	

	Diversity	<i>Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)</i>	1	5%	
	Inclusive Education	<i>Walton (2017)</i>	1	5%	
	Social Justice	<i>Davids and Waghid (2013)</i>	1	5%	
TOTAL			10		50%
Development	Policy Development	<i>Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)</i> <i>Sanders and Makotsa (2016)</i>	2	10%	
	Curriculum Development	<i>Johnson, Dempster and Hugo (2015)</i> <i>Erduran and Msimanga (2014)</i> <i>Gous-Kemp (2013)</i> <i>Sanders and Makotsa (2016)</i>	4	20%	
	Legislation	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i>	1	5%	
	Teacher Development	<i>Walton (2017)</i> <i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i> <i>Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)</i>	3	15%	
TOTAL			10		50%
GRAND TOTAL			20		

Twenty initial themes were identified in the coding process. These 20 subthemes were grouped into two main themes. The main themes were identified as *Social Justice* and *Development*. *Social Justice* included subthemes such as *inclusion*, *exclusion*, *transformation*, *equity*, *diversity* and *inclusive education*. Ten of these subthemes were identified in the articles. *Inclusion* was present in three articles, *transformation* in two, and *exclusion*, *equity*, *social justice*, *diversity* and *inclusive education* occurred in one article each.

The second main theme was *Development* and was made up of the subthemes *policy development*, *curriculum development*, *teacher development* and *legislation*. The subthemes occurred in 10 articles. *Curriculum development* was most prevalent, occurring in four articles. *Policy development* occurred in three articles, and *legislation* in one article. *Teacher development* occurred in three articles.

The research designs and methods employed in the studies reported in these articles were also examined. The following table indicates the research designs as they occurred in the selected articles.

Table 5. Research designs identified in sample articles

Research design	Authors	N	% of research designs
Narrative research	Johnson, Dempster and Hugo (2015) Walton (2017) Erduran and Msimanga (2014) Davids and Waghid (2013) Sanders and Makotsa (2016) Halai and Durrani (2016) Gous-Kemp (2013) Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)	8	72,7%
Case Study	Mampaey (2017)	1	9,1%
Participatory Action Research	Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014)	1	9,1%
Mixed-Methodology	Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)	1	9,1%
TOTAL		11	100%

Table 6. Methods identified in selected articles

Methods	Authors	N	% of methods
Observation	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i> <i>Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)</i>	2	14,3%
Questionnaires/Survey	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i> <i>Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)</i>	2	14,3%
Focus Group Interviews	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i> <i>Walton, Nel, Muller and Lebeloane (2014)</i>	2	14,3%
Delphi Method	<i>Gous-Kemp (2013)</i>	1	7,1%
Document analysis	<i>Johnson, Dempster and Hugo (2015)</i> <i>Adam, Zinn, Kemp and Pieterse (2014)</i> <i>Walton (2017)</i> <i>Erduran and Msimanga (2014)</i> <i>Davids and Waghid (2013)</i> <i>Sanders and Makotsa (2016)</i>	6	42,9%
Interviews	<i>Halai and Durrani (2016)</i>	1	7,1%
TOTAL		14	100%

These results show that qualitative and mixed methodologies were the only two methodologies that were used in the selected studies.

As far as qualitative methodology was concerned, I identified the research designs used. These included narrative research, case studies, participatory action research (PAR), as well as mixed methodology studies. Narrative research was used most often, in eight of the 11 selected studies (72,7%). Case studies, PAR, and mixed methodology were used in one case each (9,1%).

Analysis of the methods showed that observation, questionnaires/surveys, focus group interviews, the Delphi method, document analysis, and interviews

were methods used in the selected articles. The most frequent method was document analysis, used in six of 14 instances (42,9%). Observation, questionnaires/surveys, and focus group interviews were used in two of the 14 articles (14,3%). The Delphi method and individual interviews were each used once (7,1%).

Trends in research design indicated that qualitative methodology was the most frequently used as research design. Trends in choice of methodology indicated that document analysis was the most frequent method employed. No studies used quantitative methodology. In the following chapter the results are discussed in relation to findings by other authors.

Chapter 5 Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine the trends and methods that were most prevalent in inclusion research in a sample of South African journal articles published between 2013 and 2017. In order to achieve this, articles from three prominent South African academic journals in the education and psychology disciplines were collected. The themes that emerged from the articles and the methods used in the reported research studies were collected, as set out in chapter 3. Chapter 4 presented the results obtained from the analysis of the articles published in the specific timeframe. The content analysis revealed main themes and subthemes. The analysis was mainly descriptive, focusing on the content of these three journals.

The results are divided into the two main focus points in the content analysis, namely the identified themes and the research design and methods employed. The results are discussed in this chapter. These findings are compared to findings of the reviewed research to identify similarities and differences.

Artiles et al. (2006) argue that inclusive education is at the forefront of educational policies and discussions. This study revealed that two of the three selected journals that were contained articles that related to inclusion or inclusive education; the third, the *South African Journal of Psychology* did not contain any articles that met the criteria of the study. A possible reason for this could be that the journal is not specific to education and that the wide scope covered by articles it publishes may result in a focus on other areas of psychology. Although this might be true for the *South African Journal of Psychology*, this was not the case with the *Journal of Education* or the journal *Education as Change*. These journals focus specifically on education and

research within the education field. The *Journal of Education* contained two (18,2%) articles that met the study criteria, while *Education as Change* contained nine (81,8%). It is interesting to note that only 11 articles were eligible for selection for the study. This questions the comments by various authors (Department of Education, 2001; Engelbrecht, 2006) on the importance of inclusive education and inclusion in education and education research. The results of the coding reveal that two main themes were present in the analysed articles. *Social Justice* and *Development* were identified as the two main themes. *Social Justice* was represented in 50% of the articles, with *Development* occurring in the remaining 50%.

Themes and Subthemes

Social Justice

One of the two main themes was that of *Social Justice*. The definition of this term is constantly evolving and adapting to the timeframe and context in which it is used (Reisch, 2002). Social justice can be understood as an attempt to create “a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognised and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair and honest” (Park, 2012). It is only appropriate that social justice is regarded as an integral part of education research, as the focus is placed on inclusion and inclusive education. Inclusive education can be seen as a component of social justice as both are aimed at the inclusion and fair treatment of each individual. Artiles et al. (2006) argue that inclusion in itself is a form of social justice.

The main theme of social justice was made up of various subthemes that relate to social justice. These themes included inclusion, exclusion, transformation, equity, diversity, inclusive education, and social justice. There were 10

instances identified where an article contained one or more of these specific subthemes. The subtheme of inclusion was present in three of the articles (15%). Exclusion was found in two articles (10%). Transformation, equity, diversity, inclusive education and social justice each occurred in one article (5%).

The theme of social justice is reflected in the inclusive education research of Ferguson (2008), who found that the inclusion of children with disabilities was argued on two bases, one of which is social justice. It can therefore be assumed that social justice is a theme in inclusive education research.

Inclusion

Although the whole study was framed through a lens of *inclusion*, the concept itself was identified as a subtheme under the main theme of *social justice*. The definition of inclusion is also contested in research and can take on different meanings depending on the context within which it is used (Artiles et al., 2006; Black-Hawkins, 2014; Colley, 2018). This is because of the close relationship it shares with integration and inclusive education. The concept of inclusion is described by Hausstätter (2013) as a process rather than an end state. *Inclusion* is also regarded as an integral part of inclusive education, and of community psychology. In this study, *inclusion* was identified as the most commonly occurring subtheme in inclusive education research (Adam et al., 2014; Erduran & Msimanga, 2014; Gous-Kemp, 2013). This suggests that *inclusion* is an important area in inclusive research.

Exclusion

Exclusion is another concept that is multi-faceted. In their study, Graham and Ismail (2011) found that social exclusion is a theme that frequently arises in

community psychology research. *Exclusion* is a shared theme in inclusive education and community psychology. Schruijer and Stephenson (2010) also found prejudice to be of the main themes in their study; this relates closely to the theme of *exclusion*. This was substantiated in this study as *exclusion* was identified as a subtheme by the content analysis (Mampaey, 2017; Davids & Waghid, 2013).

Transformation

Transformation is an important factor in the concept of inclusion. Nevertheless, it was not identified as a trend in research consulted in this study. *Transformation* was identified as a theme in one article in this study (5%) (Adam et al., 2014).

Equity

Equity emerged as a subtheme of social justice in this study (Healy & Ferreira dos Santos, 2014). *Equity* in inclusive education is concerned with social justice that is based on the redistribution of social goods and access (Kozleski, Artiles & Waitoller, 2013). *Equity* is regarded as an important factor in the correction of past inequalities. It is for this reason that the lack of research into the theoretical and practical aspects of *equity* in the South African education system is concerning.

Diversity

Diversity is an important concept in inclusive education. Angelique and Boyd (2002) found the theme of *diversity* in their study on community psychology research. Schruijer and Stephenson (2010) found that ethnicity was a theme in

their studies in community psychology. In Schruijer and Stephenson's (2010) research, ethnicity relates to immigration and acculturation, multiculturalism, racism and prejudice. Seedat et al. (2004) found relevance, appropriateness and scope of psychology as one of the main themes researched within community psychology. This main theme was subdivided into further categories, of which *diversity* was one. As in the present study, diversity was found to be a theme in the article by Healy and Ferreira dos Santos (2014).

Inclusive Education

Ferguson (2008) studied the concept of *inclusive education* in her study, finding This study found one study (5%) that contained the theme of *inclusive education* (Walton, 2017).

Development

Engelbrecht (2006) argued that the *development* of teachers in educational psychology is lacking. In the present study, *development* was one of the identified main themes with 10 of the 20 (50%) of articles focusing on this concept. Four articles (20%) contained curriculum development as a theme, and three of the articles (15%) revealed *teacher development* as theme. Policy development as theme occurred twice (10%), and *legislation* was found once (5%).

Teacher development

Wilhelmsen and Sørensen (2017) found teacher development as one of the main themes in their research into the inclusion of children with disabilities into physical education classes. Professional development was also identified as a main theme in a study by Van Mieghemet al. (2018). *Teacher development* was

identified as one of the subthemes that occurred most frequently in this study (15%) (Walton, 2017; Halai & Durrani, 2016; Walton et al., 2014).

Curriculum development

The theme of *curriculum development* was the most frequent theme (20%) in this study. Curriculum development with regards to inclusive education is concerned with the adaptation of the curriculum to create a more inclusive environment for all learners. This highlights the focus of current research on this area. Policies often use curriculum development as one of their cornerstones for including learners with barriers to learning in the mainstream classroom (Department of Basic Education, 2011). This is reflected in previous research (Wilhelmsen & Sørensen, 2017; Johnson et al., 2015; Erduran & Msimanga, 2014; Gous-Kemp, 2013; Sanders & Makotsa, 2016).

Legislation

Legislation is closely related to policy development. It is however separated by the fact that legislation has its basis in law. Policy is based mainly on a course of action or a principle that is proposed or acted upon by an organisation or an individual (O'Connor, Wilebore & Grace, 2017). Legislation was found to be a theme in one article (5%) in this study (Halai & Durrani, 2016). This highlights a possible lack of focus on the legislation of inclusive education and inclusion in South Africa.

Policy development

Policies are the basis of change in most inclusive education endeavours. Donohue and Bornman (2014) found that policy alone could create inclusive education, and that the presence of comprehensive policy did not imply comprehensive and successful inclusive education practices. *Policy*

development research is crucial to the development of the inclusive education landscape as it is a landscape that is constantly changing, and policies should adapt concurrently to break down barriers to inclusion (Somma, 2018; Phtiaka, 2017). The importance of such research lies in the basis that it creates for practice (Mastropieri et al., 2009). Regardless of that fact, *policy development* as theme was found only once (5%) in this study.

Differences in research themes

Seedat et al. (2004) found that specific areas such as race and gender were minimal in community psychology research. Some of the research that did exist was research into teenage pregnancy. This was also a finding in the present study, as the concept of gender is only addressed in one article; Davids and Waghid's (2013) study mentions policies relating to teenage pregnancy.

Mental health has been described as a theme in previous research (Graham & Ismail, 2011; Angelique & Cully, 2000). It seems that in recent years, a movement away from mental health in inclusive education research has occurred. Another theme not found in this study is intervention and the efficacy of intervention.

Various studies (Emmers et al., 2019; Van Mieghem et al., 2018) have identified teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education as main themes in inclusive education research. The absence of this theme in this research may be based on the fact that this study only included a selection of South African journals.

Nolen (2009) identified the main themes that were present in educational psychology research: she mentions the themes of classroom achievement, learning and memory, affective/motivation beliefs, and cognition/reasoning. None of these themes were found in this current study. Messiou (2017) found

that trends in inclusive education research abroad, were dominated by physical disability. None of the articles chosen for this study mentioned this theme either.

Research design and method trends

In the current study, qualitative and mixed-method research designs occurred in the content analysis. None of the studies focused solely on quantitative research design. Qualitative studies were most prevalent in this study, a trend that was also found by Messiou (2017). This is in line with previous research that has found that quantitative studies are being conducted less frequently in the educational psychology field (Graham & Ismail, 2011; Schruijer and Stephenson, 2010; Van Miegheem et al., 2018). Pillay (2008) added to the argument with his finding that community educational research was moving to a more pluralistic methodology. This was substantiated by Powell et al. (2008), although they found that in practice, quantitative methods were most common, followed by qualitative and then mixed methodology studies. This is supported by a study by Wilhelmsen and Sørensen (2017), who found that quantitative methods were used most often in inclusive education research, followed by qualitative and mixed methods. These researchers also found the most used method was surveys, followed by interviews (Wilhelmsen & Sørensen, 2017). In the present study, questionnaires and interviews were found to have been used cumulatively in 21,4% of the articles analysed.

Graham and Ismail (2011) found that empirical studies were decreasing, and that participatory and action research was lacking. This study found one instance (9,1%) of participatory action research being employed (Healy & Ferreira dos Santos, 2014), substantiating previous research.

This study found that document analysis was most prevalently used. This is important as the main theme of development was also identified. Research into policies and legislation is vital in the development of new policies and in the improvement of existing policies. Therefore, this trend in document analysis is in line with the prevalence of development as a main theme.

Conclusion

The research in this study found that although there were overlaps between this study and trends found in previous inclusive education research, many of the trends identified in this study did not occur in previous research. It was troubling that areas that previous studies highlighted as areas of concern have not been focused on in recent South African research. Omitted areas included race, gender and physical disability.

Previous studies further found that policy and teacher education were prevalent topics in research. This was substantiated by this study, as policy development and teacher education were identified as topics of research.

The research design trends in this study were in line with those found in previous studies. Qualitative studies were favoured as their descriptive ability complements work on inclusive education and inclusion. Previous research highlighted the inclusion of mixed methodology research. This was found in this study, as this type of study was the only research design that occurred other than qualitative research.

This study found that the themes of development were common to those found in previous studies done in this field. One theme that was previously found to be dominant research in this area was physical disability. This study did not identify physical disability as a theme in any of the selected articles.

The focus identified on qualitative and mixed-method research designs was supported by previous research. This research study seems to confirm the trend that quantitative research designs are not prevalent in educational psychology research. In the following chapter the limitations and strengths of the study are discussed.

Chapter 6 Limitations and strengths of the study

Limitations

The current study focused on three prominent South African education and psychology journals. This reduced the scope of the study and may have contributed to the limited number of articles found (11). A larger sample of articles would therefore have widened the scope of the study. Exposure to international journals may further have increased the data available and created scope for comparison between South African and international trends within community educational psychology research.

The current study was conducted through the lens of inclusion, and while important, other concepts such as social justice and empowerment are central to community and educational psychology. Therefore, other concepts could be included to broaden the scope of research within the field of community educational psychology research. Further research could explore both community psychology and educational psychology journals in order to broaden the research into a study of shared values between community and educational psychology. The timeframe could be seen as a limitation, and a longer period such as a 10, 15 or 20 year review would increase the scope of the study.

Strengths

This study employed rigid criteria for inclusion of journal articles in the sample. This rigidity ensured that the selected articles were trustworthy and applicable to the study. The timeframe within which the study was conducted could be regarded as a strength as the study analysed recent research. This recent

research is important as it represents the trends in content and methodology in the current climate of inclusive education research. The use of content analysis allowed the research to be conducted in an ethical and reliable manner. This research has also created a platform and opportunity for further research. It is important that research is conducted in the trends in community educational psychology, as these trends often predict the theory and implementation of practice. This study has contributed to research in an area that is new to the field of community educational psychology.

Summary

This study explored the trends in community educational psychology research through the lens of inclusion. The analysis of selected journals indicated that although the trends in community educational psychology research are constantly changing, values that are seen as important to inclusive education, community psychology and educational psychology fields are not present in the literature. It appears that knowledge production in community educational psychology focuses on policy development and teacher development. These areas are important as they can be regarded as crucial to the field of inclusive education.

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